

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SCA-01 VO-03 /027 W

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P 081515Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9024

/AMEMBASSY ATHENS PRIORITY 575

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT PRIORITY

UNCLAS DAMASCUS 5217

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CGEN, AFSP

SUBJECT: TDY CONSULAR STAFF FOR DAMASCUS

REF: STATE 195387 AND PREVIOUS

1. WE EXPECT SHARP INCREASE IN IV CASES IN COMING MONTHS, WHICH WE WILL BE UNABLE TO HANDLE WITH PRESENT STAFF, EVEN WITH ADDITION OF SETON STAPLETON. FURTHER INCREASES IN NIV WORKLOAD CANNOT BE DISCOUNTED.

2. DURING FIRST WEEK OF AUGUST POST RECEIVED 26 APPROVED PETITIONS FROM INS, APPROVED 38 PETITIONS LOCALLY, AND RECEIVED TELEGRAPHIC NOTIFICATION APPROVAL OF ANOTHER 35 PETITIONS. ALSO DURING FIRST WEEK OF AUGUST WE COMPLETELY SCHEDULED MONTH OF AUGUST AND MOST OF SEPTEMBER FOR FINAL IV INTERVIEWS. THIS HIGH RATE OF IV SCHEDULING DOES NOT YET REFLECT ABOVE MENTIONED 99 PETITIONS, WHICH ARE FOR FAMILY GROUPS OF FROM ONE TO 8 PERSONS. APPROX. 80 PERCENT OF IV PENDING NOW ARE RESULT OF BEIRUT CONSULAR SECTION CLOSING.

3. IN VIEW OF HIGH CONGRESSIONAL INTEREST IN LEBANESE IV CASES AND DEPARTURE OF TDY KARLA SMITH ON SEPT 1, POST RECOMMENDS THAT TWO TDY OFFICERS BE ASSIGNED TO DAMASCUS ON OR BEFORE SEPT 1 FOR AS LONG AS BACKLOAD EXISTS HERE OR UNTIL CONSULAR SECTION IN BEIRUT REOPENS. WE WILL ALSO NEED ONE ADDITIONAL FSL. WE UNDERSTAND THAT

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NADWA JAMAL IN BEIRUT IS AVAILABLE AND WILLING FOR TDY

IN DAMASCUS.

4. DEPT IS REQUESTED TO APPROVE ONE TDY CONSULAR OFFICER STARTING SEPT 1 IN ADDITION TO STAPLETON AND TDY FOR NADWA JAMAL ASAP. STAPLETON SHOULD PLAN ON ARRIVING HERE ASAP. STAPLETON CAN SHARE SUTTER APARTMENT WITH \$17 PER DIEM. FSL PER DIEM WOULD BE \$34 PER DAY.

4. PRESENT PERMANENT CONSULAR OFFICER, DONALD J. SUTTER, WHO DIRECT TRANSFERRED FROM BEIRUT AT END OF MARCH, HAS ORDERS FOR TOD 6 MONTHS HL/RT FOR 2 YEARS. IN VIEW OF PRESENT AND PROJECTED WORKLOAD, HE IS WILLING TO DEFER HL UNTIL NOVEMBER. FOR LONG-TERM PLANNING PURPOSES, DEPT SHOULD BE PREPARED TO HAVE TDY REPLACEMENT FOR SUTTER WHILE ON HL DURING NOV AND DEC. EVEN SHOULD BEIRUT REOPEN BEFORE THAT TIME, WE EXPECT THAT THERE WILL STILL BE NUMBER OF LEBANESE CASES PENDING HERE WHICH WILL BE MORE THAN BACK-UP CONSULAR OFFICERS AT POST COULD HANDLE.
MURPHY

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